

# DASP Digest



US Forest Service International Programs  
Disaster Assistance Support Program

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## Highlights

Lebanon after action  
process completed.

*DASP Digest is a quarterly report produced by the Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP), a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service International Programs and USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance. For more information please visit our website at [www.fs.fed.us/global/](http://www.fs.fed.us/global/).*

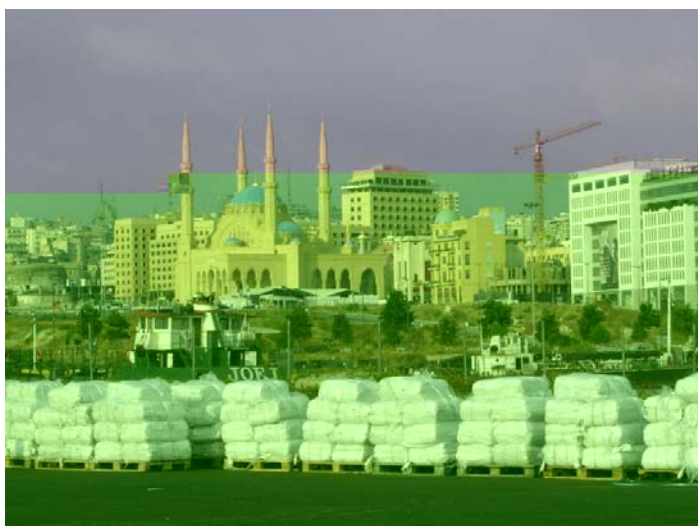


## Lessons Learned in Lebanon

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*USG relief supplies await  
distribution to conflict-affected  
populations at an airstrip in  
Beirut, Lebanon.*



On July 12, conflict escalated between the Israeli Defense Forces and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon and parts of Beirut. On July 25, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Jeffrey Feltman declared a humanitarian emergency, and on July 23, a USG Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) arrived in the region to assess the most immediate humanitarian needs while a Response Management Team (RMT) was activated to coordinate the Washington, DC-based response. Through support to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the USG has addressed priority needs,

including water and sanitation, emergency shelter, health, psychosocial support for affected youth, demining and removal of unexploded ordnance, humanitarian coordination, and transportation of relief supplies and personnel. In total, U.S. President George W. Bush has pledged \$230 million in USG humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Lebanon.

During the quarter, DASP has undertaken a multi-tier after action process focused on the USAID/OFDA humanitarian response in Lebanon. As a foundation for this process, DASP prepared and distributed an anonymous, on-line survey about USAID/OFDA's relief operations and coordination with partners. Over 20 U.S. Government staffers and nearly 30 NGO, international organization, and U.N. representatives responded. Survey responses framed the agendas for three separate workshops and meetings which were coordinated and facilitated by the DASP, including:

- On January 17, a one-day workshop for a broad audience to discuss and capture lessons learned. The morning was focused on internal USAID/OFDA discussions, and

the afternoon provided a venue for discussion with interagency colleagues from the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of State, and other agencies.

- On January 22, a meeting between USAID/OFDA and State Department's Office of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM). Focal issues included reporting during major disaster responses, and cooperative staffing of DARTs and RMTs. A final report of notes and proceedings was distributed to USAID/OFDA and PRM on March 27 and is now available in eRooms.
- On March 14, a meeting with NGO implementing partners at the offices of InterAction. Focal issues included safety/security, programming, and grant processing. A final report of notes and proceedings was distributed to USAID/OFDA and InterAction on March 22 and is now available in eRooms.

If you have any questions or comments about the Lebanon after action process, please contact Stephanie Savolaine or Laura Chapman.



*The Los Angeles County Fire Department evaluates a collapsed structure in an INSARAG exercise.*

## L.A.'s Heavy Hitters: A Glimpse into INSARAG

DASP staff member Laura Chapman traveled to California (January 18 – 22) to observe the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team as they conducted a series of simulated rescue drills.

The exercise was staged for the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), allowing international observers to determine whether the L.A.

USAR Team will receive a "heavy team" classification which would allow them to deploy on international assignments in response to a major disaster overseas. The "heavy" classification refers to the team's ability to conduct rescue operations in collapsed structures composed of a wide variety of substantial materials, including reinforced concrete. The exercise also provided a chance for the team to test and practice its own operational readiness.

Laura participated in the exercise to expand her understanding of the INSARAG classification process, which she has been working to incorporate into the International Assistance System Concept of Operations (IAS CONOPS). The IAS CONOPS details how the US will receive and request international assistance during a domestic disaster coordinated under the National Response Plan.

## DART Board: Somalia

From March 13<sup>th</sup> through April 26<sup>th</sup>, Scott Hocklander is serving as the acting Regional Advisor (RA) for USAID/OFDA's East and Central Africa Regional Office (ECARO) covering the Horn of Africa including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia.

During the first two weeks of the assignment Scott served also as the Program Officer on the Somalia Complex Emergency Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). At the conclusion of the DART, he then assumed responsibility for the Somalia portfolio under his duties as acting RA. While he has responded to some regional issues including outbreaks of locust in several Horn countries, Scott spends the majority of his time reporting on and programming the USAID/OFDA response in Somalia.

The ECARO works with a variety of partners in Somalia including the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, International Medical Corps, World Concern, World Vision International, and several United Nations organizations including UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs (OCHA). Fiscal Year 2007 sectoral priorities include water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, and basic services such as health and nutritional support for vulnerable children and women, protection issues, agriculture and food security, coordination strengthening, and livelihood programming that improves household income and access to resources.



## Attention to Detailers: Recent Assignments

- Helene Cleveland (2/12 – 2/16) compiled data for the DASP Digest (Volume 2, Issue 1) and the FY 2006 Annual Report.
- Tom Frey (3/12 – 3/23) traveled to Stuttgart, Germany to initiate consultation with colleagues in the Department of Defense about the creation of a Combatant Command for Africa (AFRICOM).
- Scott Hocklander (3/12 – 5/8) traveled to Nairobi, Kenya to provide coverage for the USAID/OFDA East and Central Africa Regional Office (ECARO). During this assignment, Scott is focusing heavily on programming and information gathering related to the current humanitarian crisis in Somalia.

## RMT Policy and Procedures Distributed

The recently revised RMT Policy and Procedures document is now in print! The DASP distributed RMT binders dated January 31, 2007 to all OFDA headquarters staff. An electronic version can be found at P:/OPS Division/Field Support Team/References/RMT

Manual, as well as in eRooms – in the Main folder, under the “Reports” heading.

The new manual has been well received by staff, one of whom commented, “the new manual is great. The RMT structure and the individual positions are well

defined and easy to understand. Reading the policy and procedures made me completely comfortable.”

If you notice the need for updates or changes, send an email to: [FOG-updates@ofda.gov](mailto:FOG-updates@ofda.gov).

## Tom Frey's Legacy is OFDA History

After over 30 years of federal service in the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, our colleague and friend Tom Frey retired on March 31, 2007.

Tom's lengthy career in public service included over 20 years during which he provided critical technical assistance in support of USAID/OFDA's global field operations. Tom conceptualized the first *Field Operations Guide (FOG) for Disaster Assessment and Response*, based on the U.S. Forest Service Fire Line Handbook. The first FOGs, published in 1992 and assembled by hand, articulated the original Disaster Assistance

Response Team (DART) concept based on the domestic Incident Command System (ICS).

Tom's visionary adaptation of ICS has now become a part of history. In a 2004 analysis to commemorate USAID/OFDA's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, researcher Rich Olsen described the DART approach as a critical juncture in that it “... is now the standard OFDA response for large events and/or complex emergencies where local infrastructure may be non-existent, inadequate or unreliable.”

Tom has made history in many other ways throughout his

career, from serving as a first-line wildland firefighter in the Alaskan wilderness to participating in DARTs in response to disasters worldwide.

After retirement, Tom may be out of sight but he will not be out of mind. He is planning to return to USAID/OFDA on a contract mechanism to participate in the development of a new U.S. Department of Defense Combatant Command for Africa (AFRICOM), based in Stuttgart, Germany.

Tom can be reached by e-mail at home in Boise, Idaho [Freyfam@clearwire.net](mailto:Freyfam@clearwire.net).

*During his years of federal service, Tom Frey has always carried a lot of weight.*







*The course brings what we do and why we do it into clearer focus.*

~ Gary Barrett

## Barrett Earns International Diploma

Gary Barrett traveled to Geneva in March to attend a humanitarian assistance diploma course conducted by the Center for International Health and Cooperation (CIHC) at Fordham University. Participants included U.S. military personnel, United Nations staff, NGO workers, and others members of the humanitarian and private sector.

The intensive four-week training program includes more than 200 hours of instruction, enabling aid workers to attend with minimal disruption to field operations. The course reflects the complexity and intensity of conditions faced by humanitarian workers actively engaged in the field.

Multidisciplinary teaching methods included lectures,

case studies, seminars, practical exercises and scenarios covering the full range of disciplines involved in humanitarian programs. These included management, logistics, health, psychology, social sciences, anthropology, communication, agriculture, environment, education, conflict resolution, international law, civil/military relations, security, media, politics and economics.

## Boise Training Builds Detailer Cadre

DASP detailers provide surge staffing for Washington-based assignments, including RMTs; overseas support to deployed assessment and DART teams; and technical expertise that supports USAID/OFDA's day-to-day operations and its responses to disasters worldwide.

To continue to build and enhance this valuable surge staffing cadre, the DASP team conducted two iterations of the 2-day orientation session for potential Forest Service and Bureau of Land

Management (BLM) detailers. These briefings introduced 49 Forest Service and BLM staffers to the DASP's detailer program and its relationship to USAID/OFDA. The objectives of the course were:

- To explain the purpose of the DASP detailer program and how it supports the surge staffing needs of USAID/OFDA;
- To describe and discuss the type of detailer opportunities available to Forest Service and BLM personnel;
- To give participants a brief overview of OFDA, its mission, and partners;
- To showcase the importance of cultural differences when responding to disasters or working in new environments; and
- To identify additional steps

necessary to participate in the DASP detailer program.

BLM International Programs Coordinator Tom Frey praised the redesigned version of the orientation because it gives candidates accurate expectations about the detailer program and the nature of work with USAID/OFDA.

Participant feedback was very positive, and included these comments:

- *"Excellent Sessions! Very Useful. I can't wait to get my security clearance."*
- *"This was one of the best courses I have taken. The cultural awareness exercise was fun and engaging."*
- *"This briefing totally expanded my knowledge of USG humanitarian operations. The instructors did a wonderful job and kept the class motivated."*



## Asia and Caribbean MDROs Prepare for Disasters

The DASP in partnership with OFDA's Asia and Latin America and Caribbean Regional Offices sponsored Regional Mission Disaster Preparedness consultations in Bangkok, Thailand, March 5 - 6, and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, March 27 - 29, 2007. Twenty one Mission Disaster Relief Officers (MDROs) representing 23 countries attended. The MDRO is appointed by the chief of mission and is the focal point at post for disaster-related information, planning, and activities affecting the host country.

The objectives of the training were to familiarize MDROs with USG disaster response options, the resources and capacities of OFDA, and the appropriate procedures for accessing these resources; to orient MDROs to the guidelines for developing the Embassy's Mission Disaster Relief Plan (MDRP); and finally, to provide MDROs with the knowledge and tools to successfully respond to an emergency involving the host population.

*The MDRO Team from the Caribbean*



Each consultation was tailored to the individual needs of the region. In Asia, many participants had a wealth of information and experience to share with the group, given the high disaster vulnerability in the region and their previous experience as MDROs. In FY 2006 alone, eleven countries experienced disasters severe enough to warrant OFDA assistance. Earthquakes occurred in India, Indonesia, and Pakistan. Typhoons, a tsunami, and torrential rains impacted more than 76 million people in China, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam. Insecurity in East Timor, Indonesia, Nepal, and Sri Lanka disrupted daily life, curtailed economic activity, and led to internal and cross-border population migration. A drought in Nepal and volcanic eruption in Indonesia further impacted these countries.

In contrast, many of the MDROs from the Caribbean were newly appointed and it was therefore a good opportunity to meet in advance of hurricane season.



*The MDRO Team from Asia*

Heavy rains occurring in Santo Domingo provided a relevant backdrop for the consultation, allowing participants to monitor an event in real time.

One challenge identified by both sets of MDROs was the ability to rapidly fund partners in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. This can be particularly difficult in small island nations where U.S.-based non-governmental organizations may not be present.

disaster relief partners with contracting staff in advance of a disaster situation – identifying potential barriers and exploring possible solutions. In addition, staff from the contracting and finance offices had the opportunity to learn more about OFDA and the manner in which it works, as a result they became more sensitized to needs in a relief context.

MDROs applied what they learned by preparing a draft



*MDROs from the Bahamas and Dominican Republic discuss the disaster declaration process*

Since the USAID Missions in Bangkok and Santo Domingo provide regional services, OFDA was able to invite staff from the Regional Contracting Office and Financial Management Office to participate and provide advice and guidance on mechanisms to move funding quickly. This proved useful on multiple fronts. It allowed MDROs an opportunity to discuss potential

MDRP for their own post. Participants identified country specific hazards and vulnerabilities, identified potential disaster relief partners, and made presentations on the status of their MDRP. Participants left with a better understanding of the issues facing their respective regions and a solid support network.

**US Forest Service  
International Programs  
DASP**

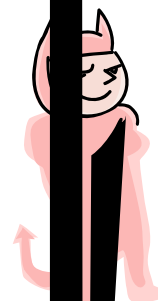
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## The Devil in the Details

- In partnership with USAID/OFDA's Training Unit (TU), Gary Barrett completed two CPR/First Aid trainings (February 21 and 28). A total of 20 USAID/OFDA staff received or renewed their Red Cross certification as a result of the courses.
- Also in partnership with TU, DASP completed a DART/RMT course (February 6 – 9) for 24 USAID/OFDA staff members and partners. The course featured several new sessions about the new RMT Policy and Procedures, and received positive reviews.
- BLM has assigned Winni Sorensen as the new program manager for international programs; she will assume Tom Frey's responsibilities following his retirement. DASP hosted Winni and Budget Specialist Cindy Callahan for a day of consultations and introductions with USAID/OFDA and Forest Service International Programs on February 27.
- DASP staffer Scott Hocklander completed USAID Acquisition Management Training (February 20 – 23).
- During March, all DASP staff members completed two separate online training courses concerning *Reasonable Accommodations* and *Performance Based Management*.



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